

A
PATHETIC ADDRESS
TO THE
DISSENTING LAITY,

In Relation to the

TEST ACTS:

Occasioned by

Two Letters: One in the *Craftsman* of *April 3*:
and another in the *Gazetteer* of *April 15*.

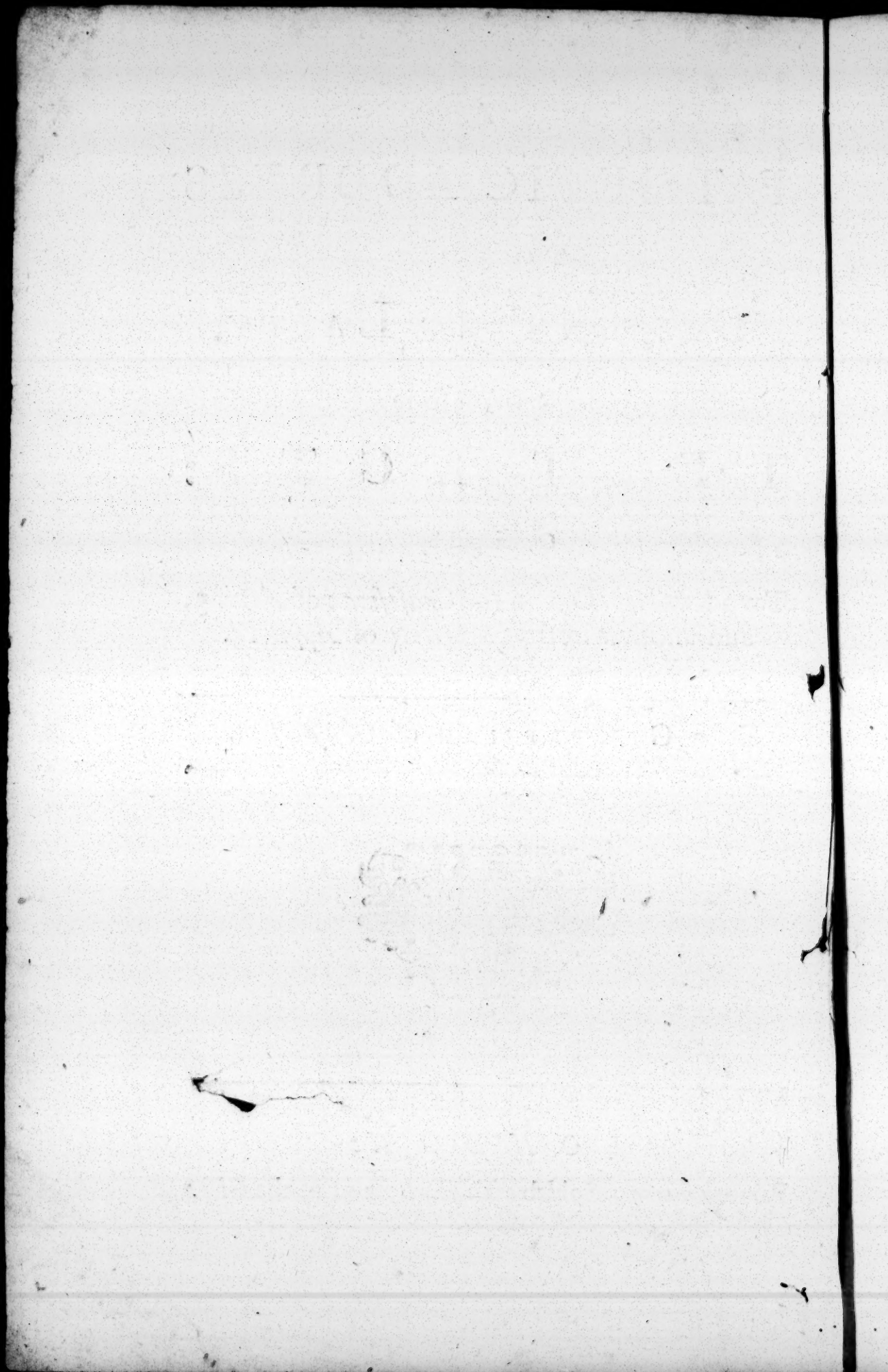
By a GENTLEMAN of *Gray's-Inn*.



L O N D O N:

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A
PATHETIC ADDRESS
TO THE
DISSENTING LAITY.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Repeal of the *Test Acts* at this Juncture of Time, being judged improper by that Part of the *Legislature* to whom you made Application for that Purpose, it was hoped by all who were Friends to the present happy Establishment, and the *truly* scrupulous Dissenters, that the passionate Zeal which at first appear'd among some of you, would have subsided, and a general *Acquiescence* to the *Judgment* of your *Representatives* have taken place: But the Event shews this was only flattering Hopes. And yet what affords a more melancholy Consideration is, that the declared Adversaries to our most excellent Constitution, to our Civil and Religious Rights, take umbrage thereat, and are exerting their Talents, and using every Art and Stratagem to improve the Incident, to Views *destructive* of the *Nation's Peace*, and the *Dissenting Interest*, by endeavouring to exasperate your Passions, and excite your Resentments towards *those* whom they would have believed are

B

your

your *Enemies*; tho' your own Observation and Knowledge from past Experience, must satisfy and convince you, that *they* are, in truth, your best and only secure *Friends*.

And since both *Ministerial* and *Anti-ministerial* Writers, have in their Turns, by *different* Methods, and with very *opposite* Designs, *addressed* you on the Occasion, (and which is a plain Testimony that your Numbers and Interest render you worthy the Notice and Regard of *both* Parties, as a Body of People not inconsiderable,) therefore it is, that I also, who am neither, but only a Person well affected to the present Establishment, beg leave to take the same Liberty with them; and I shall studiously be careful to treat you with all imaginable Respect and Tenderneſs: For tho' I think myself happy in being a *Member* of the *establish'd Church*, which, for the *Purity* of its *Doctrine*, and the *Reasonableness* of its *Worship*, I take to be the *best* constituted, and most *Apostolical* of any, yet my *Charity* for your *Scruples*, and *Respect* for your *Persons*, make me solicitous to do you any Service within my Power; and if what is offered by me, on the present Occasion, can have any Tendency to *quiet* your Minds, and render you easy and patient under your *late* Disappointment, it may be an *acceptable* Part, and no less useful to yourselves, than pleasing to those who have you in good Esteem.

I can with great Truth affirm, that I have not received Directions from any one to address you on the Occasion, and therefore what happens to fall from my Pen, I would not have you impute to the Effect of *Ministerial* Power and Influence; nor is it my Intention to justify and abet those who represent you as *Dupes* to the present *M—y*, or as a *dangerous Body* to the *State*, when *disobliged*,
being

being satisfied *both* is false in Fact. No; for in the Sequel of this Discourse you will clearly perceive, that I am governed only by the Reason and Truth of Things; and perhaps the Sentiments of an *indifferent* Spectator, an *unprejudiced* Person, may have Weight and Influence with you, to bear the *Affliction* with a *decent* Resignation; and no doubt you will the sooner regard what is offer'd, as you will find no *Expressions* favouring of *Asperity* and *Ill-nature* towards either your *Principles* or *Practices*.

But as *you*, and not your *Ministers*, are solely concerned in the Repeal of the *Test Acts*, it is unnecessary to mention them, because unless they could get the Act of *Uniformity* disannulled, and be at *Liberty* in declaring their *Assent* and *Consent* to the *Book of Common Prayer*, and *subscribing* to the thirty-nine *Articles of Religion*, the other would be of no use to them: For in fact, the Repeal of the *Test Acts* as little concern the *Dissenting Ministers*, as that of the *Uniformity Act* in favour of *Ministerial Conformity*, was it repealed, would affect the *Dissenting Laity*; and therefore how much soever *they* may have exerted themselves on the Occasion, all their *Zeal* must appear to be *misapplied*, as being displayed against an *Affair* *they* had little or no *Concern* in. This Observation I doubt not but you will *improve* to the *Purposes* intended.

Having premised thus much, I now proceed to the chief Point in Hand, and I think it necessary in the first Place to declare, that it is not my Design to enter into the Merits of the Debate, whether the *Test Acts* are *Infringements* of your *natural Rights* or not, since I am informed that has been at large discuss'd by each Party concerned; nor yet whether a certain *Honourable Gentleman*

did give you any *reasonable Expectation* of having these *Acts repealed* this *Session* of *Parliament*, as has been very confidently asserted; because, supposing *each* to be a certain Truth, yet I question not but to evince that the *Attempt* at this *Time* would not have been *prudent, wise, or politick*, even admitting the *M——y* were ever so much *inclined* to back your Application; and if that appears to be *Fact*, then I think you will have abundant Cause to be easy and well satisfied.

From the Reason and Nature of Things, it is a certain Truth, that a particular Regard is to be had to a *proper and seasonable Time* to undertake any *Enterprize* of *great Importance*, the *Consequence* of which, however satisfactory and agreeable to *some*, may be highly displeasing and offensive to *others*. This is so evident as to need no Comment, since the Observation itself is a plain Demonstration of its Truth and Certainty. The various Passions, different and prevailing Interests of Men at home, and the Situation of public Affairs abroad, are often necessary to be in a due and proper Manner consider'd, on such solemn Occasions; and that the *Repeal* of the *Test Acts* is a Concern of *great Moment*, none will deny, who has in Remembrance how much Dispute and Controversy the *Attempt* only has given Birth to, on both Sides; and which is *one* Argument of no *small Weight* to prove the *Importance* of the *Thing*, and that *this* was not a *convenient Time* for its being *repealed*.

But to enter more minutely into that Point: Do not you, and every Friend to the Government, see and lament a Misfortune that no *reasonable Method* can prevent; I mean the *two* weekly *Libellers* against the Government, who go on with *Impunity*, because the *punishing* them *one Way* may
not

not be with *Safety* another? and yet you cannot doubt but the *M——y's* Interest and Inclination are to have them silenced. As this Instance ought to satisfy you that the *present* is not a *Time* any way *opportune* for the *repealing* those *Acts*, in respect to the *ill Use* the *Enemy* might make thereof, by *enflaming* the *Minds* of the People, and *raising* *Prejudices* against the Administration; so must it convince you, that were the *M——y* as willing to assist you therein, as most certainly they would be glad to *prevent* the *propagating* of *weekly* *Sedition*, yet that *neither* may, by the Rules of Prudence, be judged practicable in the *present* *Conjuncture*.

That those who distinguish themselves by the Name of *Patriots*, or at least the greatest Part of them, do lie in Ambush to improve the *Incident*, to very *evil* Purposes, is *notorious* from the *Conduct*, and even *Declaration*, of their *Head Writer*; whose *Neutrality* for a Time was to *conceal* the *Advantage* he proposed to himself, not in *your* Favour, but how in the most effectual Manner to create a *fatal Misunderstanding* between the *Ministry* and *yourselves*, by insinuating Jealousies and unreasonable Surmises, on the Rejection of your *Petition*: Or, if it had *taken* place, then to have *loaded* the *Ministry* with incessant Reproaches of *their Disaffection* and Neglect to the *establish'd Church*, of their being *Presbyterians* and *Republicans*, and that the *Church* was again in Danger of being demolished, in complaisance to the *Dissenters*. This ambi-dextrous Piece of Policy none need question, was the latent and secret Views of the Party; and to put it out of dispute, the *Craftsman* himself is at last forced to acknowledge it. Says he,

* “ Whilst

* “ Whilst the late Dispute about the *Repeal of the Test Acts* was on Foot, I purposely kept myself *neuter*, according to a former Engagement, and I am neither under any Obligation, nor would it be of any Use, to declare myself upon it at present; tho’ I cannot forbear expressing my Opinion thus far, that if we may judge from the Conduct of the *Dissenters*, for three Years past, the *Church of England* would be in no Danger from *such Politicians*, even supposing the Test was to be taken away.”

This frank and open (but most certainly *unguarded*) Declaration, *supplies* the Place of every *Surmise*, and must fully establish all the *Dissenters* in the Belief of what I before observed, that *this* was not a *proper Time* for the *repealing* those *Acts*; that had it been done, instead of representing you as “*Dupes to the Ministry*, and weak *Politicians*,” you would have been pronounced *Enemies* to the CHURCH and STATE; and perhaps, as the *Honourable Gentleman* himself was, about the *Bank Contract*, and with as much Reason, have also been *stigmatized* every Saturday with an Advertisement to the following Purpose: † “*The worst Enemies of our Church are let into her Bowels, under the holy Umbrage of Sons, who neither believe her Faith, own her Mission, submit to her Discipline, or comply with her Liturgy: For the admitting this TROJAN Horse, big with Arms and Ruin, into our holy City, the strait Gate is now laid quite open; her Walls and Inclosures are pulled down, and a high Road made in upon her Communion.*”

* April 3.

† Sachev. Serm. p. 16.

Can you doubt of *this Usage*, had the *Repeal* been now effected, when you remember the public *Incendiary*, and *Tool* of the Party, who has made ready such an *Advertisement*, was employed by that *outlawed perjured Wretch* to abuse you, *who is, or lately was, the Author* of the above *weekly Paper*, in which we are told with a Sneer, or hypocritical Impudence, “that the *Church* of “*England* would be in no Danger from such “*Politicians*, even supposing the *Test* was to be “taken away.”

If you, Gentlemen, will but carefully peruse the *Craftsman* before mentioned, and his *Confederate* Writer of *Sedition*, *Fog*, in his Paper of the 27th of *March*, you will not want full Conviction, that as at present they have offer'd a most audacious *Insult* on your *Understandings*, in endeavouring to make you believe *they* are in *your Interest*, and have *your Cause* at Heart, so had the *Tests* been repealed, you would most certainly have been abused and villified, and the *M——y* slander'd and aspers'd, for consenting thereto; and that such *new* Seeds of Discord and Sedition would have been again *sown* in the *Nation*, as nothing but *Length* of Time, and a *dextrous prudent* Management, could have extirpated.

And if the Observation is just, and undeniably true, can any thing more demonstrably prove, that the *Time* you fixed on was not *proper* for an Application of this Nature; or afford us a more evident Instance of the Wisdom and Penetration of his *Majesty* and his *Ministry*, in not concurring with you therein: For *who* so capable of judging *when* the *Time* is most *proper*, as *those* who *best* know the Designs and Tempers of the People? Who so ready and willing to effect it for you,

as *those* whose Interest and Inclination conspire to that Purpose? Of which more hereafter.

It ought farther to be consider'd, that at present you have neither a TILLOTSON, a TENISON, nor a SHARP, at the Head of the *Church*, to influence their *Provincial Bishops* and *Clergy* in favour of your Designs: no more than a COMPTON at *London*, a BURNET at *Salisbury*, a PATRICK at *Ely*, a WILLIAMS at *Chichester*, nor a KIDDER at *Bath and Wells*, to concur in and abet your Endeavours. Unless the great WILLIAM had been blessed with Men of such *moderate* Principles as *they* were possessed of, *He* could no more have accomplish'd what he did for you at that Time, than the present M——y can in what you now desire.

If you will impartially weigh how arduous and difficult it is for a KING and *Ministry* to steer Affairs so, as to please and give Content to every *Individual*, among such *Numbers* of People, whose Principles, Interest, and private Views, are so *contrary* and *incompatible* the one to the other, you can have no *Reason* to entertain any Sentiments of *Prejudice* towards either. on the Repulse you have lately met with, allowing they are the best Judges of the most *proper* Time.

A recent and remarkable Instance cannot escape your Memory of the great Opposition made against a certain *Divine's* Preferment in the *Church*; and tho' his Interest was espoused by some great *Personages*, yet the Odium raised against him, by a powerful Party, was such, as to render it *prudent* not only to *suspend* the filling up the Vacancy much beyond the usual Time, but even at last to *disappoint* the Person of that Preferment.

Nor can you forget a similar Instance in the *Honourable Person* himself, against whom your
Enemies

Enemies endeavour to *incense* you. Was it ever doubted that *he* had the *Excise Scheme* cordially at Heart? Was not his Interest and great Power used in the most probable and likely Manner to have it effected? and yet when he found the Clamour it occasion'd, the *Enemies* it created him, and the ill Consequence that might have ensued, had he been resolute to have it accomplish'd, how *prudently* did he *drop* and *decline* any *farther Proceedings* therein?

And can you with Reason expect the same *Honourable Person*, who must have ever in his Mind the above Particulars, to *do that for you* which he would not *venture at for himself*? Would any *experienced, wise Man*, so *soon* after, make the like Attempt, in an Affair equally *disagreeable* to the *Majority* of the *People*, and thereby occasion *fresh Animosities*, perhaps of a more *difficult* Nature to be appeased? Compare but these few Observations together, and consider them void of Prejudice, and I persuade myself you will clearly be of an Opinion, that as there is a Time and Season for all Things, so *this* was not a *Time* any way *opportune* and *convenient* for repealing the *Tests*, however *reasonable* the *Thing* in *itself* should be *allowed* to be.

And yet farther to confirm the Truth and Certainty of what I at first observed, that *all Times* are not *alike proper*, I will produce an Instance even in the *present disputed Case*, that happened in the Year 1718. as it is related by *one* whose *Affection* for *you* was never *questioned*. Says my Author,

* "The Protestant Dissenters, besides these two
" Bills against them, (*meaning the Occasional and*

* Oldmixon's History of King George, p. 671.

“ *Schism Bills*) groaned under the Burthen of the
 “ *Sacramental Test* ; and many of them were of
 “ Opinion, that if it was thought they had not
 “ deserved, or indeed had a natural Right, both
 “ as to Conscience and Property, to whatever
 “ their Fellow-Subjects had a Right, they should
 “ have recourse to Time and Patience, and not
 “ concern themselves about any Relief that was
 “ not general. The *Protestant Dissenters* were
 “ consulted about the *Repeal* of the *two Bills*
 “ above-mentioned, and they had numerous Meet-
 “ ings in several Parts of the Kingdom, to con-
 “ fer with proper Persons on this Head. The
 “ *Majority* in all these Meetings were for a *gene-*
 “ *ral* *Repeal* of the Acts that were Hardships
 “ upon them, or leaving Matters as they stood ;
 “ but they were *assured* that his MAJESTY had
 “ *press'd* that *Affair* as far as it would well go with
 “ the *Ministers*, who, and the Earl of *Sunderland*
 “ in particular, said, *it was not practicable*, and
 “ to attempt the *Repeal* of the *Test Act* would ruin
 “ all. His Majesty was graciously pleased to tell
 “ LORD BARRINGTON, (who was a *Dissenter*,)
 “ That if there was any Hopes of carrying the
 “ Whole, he would not be against it ; but if
 “ there was no Hopes, as he was *assured* by his
 “ *Ministers*, He believed the *Dissenters* were too
 “ much his Friends to insist upon a Thing which
 “ might be infinitely prejudicial to him, without do-
 “ ing them any good, but on the contrary a great deal
 “ of hurt. This swayed with the more moderate
 “ of that Party, and the *Test* was then given up,
 “ after they had received *Assurances*, from such as
 “ were in Conference with them, that they should
 “ be eased of that too in a proper Time. — The
 “ *Ministers* did not mislead their Majesty on this
 “ Occasion. There was so much Opposition to the
 “ *Repeal*

“ *Repeal of the Schism and Occasional Bill, that we*
 “ *may perceive if the Test Act had been joined to*
 “ *it, all would have miscarried.*”

This is so full and pertinent to the Point in Hand, that I think it needless to urge any other Arguments on the Occasion.

And therefore if the *Honourable Person* did give any *Affurance* in favour of a *Repeal*, yet if he afterwards found it to be *impracticable*; so far from his being censured for not persevering therein, with a View of obtaining it, that the Instance ought to be applauded, as one, among many, of his great Prudence and Sagacity, in declining it. Thus have I, in a very plain and convincing Manner, demonstrated, that the repealing the *Test Acts* at this *Juncture* of Time, would have been very imprudent and impolitick, and perhaps attended with fatal Consequences; the Consideration of which does at once fully acquit the *Honourable Person* of any designed Breach of Promise towards the *Dissenters*, even supposing he had made one, in favour of a *Repeal*.

However, tho' I think it evidently appears that this Session was an improper Time, yet I differ much from the *Gazetteer*, * “ That your late Application to Parliament for the Repeal or Explanation of the Corporation and Test Acts must have convinced you that there hardly can be a Time when the Legislature will give their Consent to the Repeal or Explanation of these Laws.” I must confess, the whole Letter seems to me to be wrote with much greater Zeal than Prudence and good Judgment: But notwithstanding what is there said, and by other Authors, I would not have you despair of being relieved in what you have

* April 15.

so much at Heart, because there is great Reason for you to *expect* and *hope* for it, when *Things* and *Circumstances* more *concur* to make it *convenient*, as I doubt not plainly to demonstrate.

You want not to be told, the Share your Party had in the happy *Revolution*, and of your zealous Attachment ever since to the *Succession* of the Crown in the present *Royal Family*; that your Principles as to Government are well approved of, however distasteful those of Religion are; that none of you have any *Object* to center your *Allegiance* in as a *Sovereign*, but the *Regnant KING*, and his *Royal Offspring*, tho' many of your Fellow-Subjects have; that in the most dangerous and critical Times you have exerted your Power and Interest in Behalf of Liberty and the present Establishment, and have always disavowed and avoided the acting in Concert with such as are Enemies to both. If you can view yourselves in this Light, you, no question, think, that the Friends to the present Government do the same: And are not these moving Considerations enough to afford you a *reasonable Expectation*, that the *Time* may yet come, when *all Circumstances* will conspire to favour your Design? And therefore so far from driving you to *Despair* with the *Gazetteer*, I would advise you not to be *dejected*, but to receive *Comfort*, and *rejoice in Hope*, that you or yours will see the Day: For have not several of our *Princes* since the *Revolution* given you Cause to *expect* it, and discover'd their *own Inclination* to be in favour thereof?

The *Immortal WILLIAM*, in his Speech to the *Parliament*, thus expressed himself on the Occasion:
 " * I shall put you in mind of one Thing, which

* March 16. 1688.

" will

“ will conduce much to our Settlement, as a Set-
 “ tlement will to the Disappointment of our En-
 “ mies. I am, with all the Expedition I can,
 “ filling up the Vacancies that are in *Offices* and
 “ *Places of Trust*, by this late *Revolution*. I hope
 “ you are sensible there is a Necessity of some Law
 “ to settle the Oaths, to be taken by all Persons
 “ to be admitted to such Places; — and as I
 “ doubt not but you will sufficiently provide
 “ against *Papists*, so I hope you will leave Room for
 “ the Admission of all *Protestants*, that are willing
 “ and able to serve. This *Conjunction* in my Ser-
 “ vice, will tend to the better uniting you among
 “ yourselves, and the strengthening you against
 “ your common Enemy.

But tho' his then *Majesty*, in a particular Manner,
 recommended in his *Speech*, the Repeal of the *Test*
Act, and that his *Ministry* also readily engaged
 therein, yet they could neither carry that Point,
 nor yet a *Comprehension*, altho' they had both much
 at Heart; and yet it seemed to be a happy Con-
 juncture to have had it accomplished. For Bi-
 shop *Kennet* informs us, that the Time I refer to *
 afforded “ a glorious Opportunity of reconciling
 “ all moderate *Dissenters* to the Communion of the
 “ Church of England, which might have been
 “ happily effected, if this extraordinary Juncture
 “ had been well managed and improved.”

I have already observed, that his late *Majesty*,
 of *Glorious Memory*, declared to Lord *Barrington*,
 “ that if there was any Hopes of repealing the
 “ *Test Acts*, he would not be against it;” and even
 prest the Affair with his Ministers as far as it
 would go; and, alluding to the same Point, as I
 apprehend, in his *Speech* to the *Parliament*, his

* Hist. of Engl. Vol. iii. p. 558.

Majesty was pleased thus to say; * “ I have always looked upon the *Glory* of a Sovereign, and the *Liberty* of a Subject, as *inseparable*, and think it is the peculiar Happiness of a *British* King to reign over a *free* People. As the Civil Rights, therefore, and Privileges of my Subjects, and especially of my two Houses of Parliament, do justly claim my most tender Concern; if any Provision designed to perpetuate those Blessings to your Posterity remain *imperfect*, for want of Time during this Session, maturely to discuss and settle Matters of so great Importance, I promise myself, you will take the *first* Opportunity to render *my* Wishes for your Happiness *complete* and *effectual*, and to strengthen the *Union*, which is of so much Consequence to the Welfare of this Kingdom.

And considering the *happy Days of Liberty* you and all enjoy, under his present *Majesty's* tranquil Administration, I presume it would not be injurious to his *Majesty* were you to conceive, that, in Imitation of his *royal Father*, on the same Occasion, he has “ pressed the Affair as *far* as it would go with his *Ministers*, but that they have informed his *Majesty* it was not *practicable*; and that *he* may have declared, that if there were *no Hopes*, as he was *assured* by his *Ministers* there was not, he believed the *Dissenters* were *too much his Friends* to insist upon a Thing which might be infinitely *prejudicial to him*, without doing *them any good*, but, on the contrary, a *great deal of hurt*.

Tho' this is only a *Conjecture* of mine, yet probably it is true, since what the *Gazetteer* † says

* April 18. 1719.

† April 16th.

concerning the Repeal, as to the Difficulty of doing it at this Time, seems to *imply* that something to the like Purpose has been declared by his M——y, or his M——rs; and *taking it for granted*, it affords you an Instance that his *present Majesty* has the *same* paternal Care and Tenderness for *you*, even in the *disputed* Case, as had his *late Royal Father*: And no doubt *you* will *testify* the *same* resigned and dutiful Behaviour to his *present Majesty* on the Disappointment, as so *conspicuously* appeared in the *Dissenters* at that Time.

And for your Comfort in Futurity, ponder well in your Minds the late Words of his *Royal Highness* the Prince of WALES, to the *Quakers*, on Occasion of their applying for his Royal Patronage and Favour, in relation to their depending Bill: “*That as a Friend to Liberty in general, and*
 “*to Toleration in particular, he wished they might*
 “*meet with all proper Favour; but for himself, he*
 “*never gave his Vote in Parliament; and to in-*
 “*fluence his Friends, or direct his Servants, in*
 “*theirs, did not become his Station: To leave them*
 “*entirely to their own Conscience and Understanding,*
 “*was a Rule he had hitherto prescribed to himself,*
 “*and purposed through his whole Life to observe.*”

How ought this tender and pathetic, this Christian Royal Declaration, to animate your Minds, and buoy up your Spirits, however affected they may be at your late Disappointment: For is not this a moving Consideration, a most powerful Argument, for you not to *despond*, not grow *discontented*, or *dissatisfied* with your present happy Circumstances, (tho’ it may, as *you think*, have one only *Allay*,) when you have such a *raised* Prospect, that as your present wise and merciful Sovereign thinks it a great Part of the Felicity of his Reign

to behold you enjoying your religious Rights, in the most extensive Manner; so his *Royal* Successor, when it pleases divine Providence to permit his Swaying the *British* Sceptre, (which God grant may be late,) does already assure you, that
 “ *He is not only at present a Friend to Liberty in ge-*
 “ *neral, and to Toleration in particular; but to leave*
 “ *his Friends and Servants to their own Conscience*
 “ *and Understanding, is a Rule he has hitherto pre-*
 “ *scribed to himself, and purposes through his whole*
 “ *Life to observe.*”

This seems a happy *Prediction* in your Favour, of *what* you *may* expect from *him*, should the *Circumstances* of future Times concur with *his* *Royal* Inclinations; and you may remember that an *Essay* was lately published for a Review of the *Common Prayer*, which, if effected, might have no small Tendency to make more easy the *Terms* of your *Conformity* to our *Church*; and tho’ the *Author* was contradicted in relation to one disputable Point, that of retaining the *Athanasian Creed*, yet the *Design* itself, so far from being *opposed*, was *admitted* to be *fit* and *reasonable*: An Observation that cannot but serve to excite your Hopes, that as the *one*, so the *other*, may in *Time* be *attempted*, and *completed*, unless your *Conformity* hereafter will render it needless.

And tho’ I pretend not to the *Spirit of Prophecy*, yet there is an *Incident* in *History* which I cannot avoid observing, as being very applicable to what I last hinted, and which must give all who are hearty Friends and Well-wishers to a *farther Reformation* in *Religion*, considerable Encouragement to think, that it will be effected in some short Time: It is relative to the Nuptials of his *Royal Highness* with the *Princess* of *Saxe Gotha*.

It is observable, that as his *Royal Highness* the Prince of Wales is the Great Grandson of the *Electoꝛ Palatine* (after King of *Bohemia*) by *Elizabeth*, Daughter of our King *James I.* whose Zeal and Sufferings for the Protestant Faith, whose exalted Virtues, and invincible Constancy under Trials the most severe and afflictive to human Nature, appeared most conspicuously in both, as is well known to all, or may be learnt from History: So the Princess whom his *Royal Highness* has espoused, is Great Grand-daughter to *ERNEST III.* of the *Ducal* House of *SAXONY*, whose Family engaged early in the *Reformation of Religion*, in Conjunction with the above-mentioned *Electoꝛ Palatine*, and several other Princes of *GERMANY*; and I find in *HISTORY* this excellent Character of him: "A Prince, (to use the Words of the noble Immortal *Hoff*) for his great Sincerity, for his Zeal to Religion, for his Political Prudence, and œconomical Industry, justly to be preferred before any that ever ruled; one in whom the divine Promise was apparently verified, viz. *To those who make it their first Care to seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, all other Things shall be added.* Let me observe farther, that in 1641 he obtained the Principality of *Saxe-Gotha*, and great Part of the County of *Henneberg* in 1660: He rebuilt the Castle of *Gotha*, formerly called *Grimmenstein*, but by him *Fridenstein*: He was Author of the *Weimar Bible*, and departed this Life *March 26. 1675.* leaving by his Dutches, *Sophia Elizabeth*, Daughter of the Duke of *Sax-Aldenburgh*, *Frederick*, Grandfather to the present espoused Princess of *Wales.*"

And that the Grand-children of these two excellent, virtuous, and truly pious Princesses, who

most signally appeared at first in favour of the *Reformation*, should be thus *united* and *joined* in one, and that they, and their *Issue* will in due Time assuredly become *Head* of the *first reformed* and most considerable *Protestant Nation* in the *World*, when but a few Years since nothing was more improbable and unlikely, is a most remarkable Instance that *divine Providence* does no less *countenance* and *bless* the *Reformation*, than it *rewards* in a very singular and extraordinary Manner the *Descendants* of those illustrious and ever valuable *Princesses* who first espoused its *Cause*. Thus truly is the afore-said Text of Scripture applied to *Duke ERNEST*, literally accomplish'd to them in the *Issue* of both.

With what *Thankfulness* then should we view and admire the *Smiles* of *Heaven* to us, in the midst of our *Ingratitude* for, and *Forgetfulness* of, *past Deliverances* from the most *imminent* Dangers? How *grateful* should we strive to be, for such *kind* Interpositions of *Heaven*; such gracious Dispensations of his Mercy as he continually is affording us? No doubt the Reflection will be a powerful *Incentive* to you, and all *English Protestants*, not to become *Malecontents* to the *King* of *Heaven*, no more than to his *Vicerent* on Earth: And moreover, it cannot but give us all a *well-grounded Hope*, that the *divine Will* has something yet farther to accomplish in favour of the *reformed Religion* among us, by this *happy Conjunction*: An *Union* no less unexpected in itself, distant and remote from the Views of most, then it will tend to cement and strengthen the *Protestant Interest*. Let us then express our Joy and Satisfaction in his *ROYAL HIGHNESS's Choice*, and conceive it to be the Dictates of *Heaven*: Let us improve it in every Instance, as becomes *reformed Christians* and good *Subjects*; and tho' at present you are distinguished by the Name
of

Dissenters, and great *Pity* it is that you will be so, yet from what has been said, you have good Hope that in *some future Time* such a Spirit of Love, Unity, and Christian Charity, will so powerfully and mutually prevail, as that the *Tests* may be repealed, or by the *Alteration* of a few Particulars in our *Liturgy*, you may without Scruple conform, that so no other *Distinction* may remain among us, but of such as are for the *Christian Protestant Faith*; for *Civil* and *Religious Liberty*; the *Succession* of the *Crown* in the present *Royal Family*; and such as are for *Popery* and *Infidelity*, *Bigottry* and *Slavery*, and who would have a *Popish Prince* to govern this *Protestant Kingdom*.

I hope then you are by this Time fully convinced, that no *Disrespect* has been shewn you by the *Ministry*; that they wanted not *Inclination* to assist you in this Application, had the *Time* and other *Circumstances* made it *fit* and *convenient*; and yet that you ought not to despond, but to have good Hope, as you have a *well-grounded Assurance*, from many particular Instances, that it may hereafter be effected for you, unless by prudently overcoming your *Prejudices*, you would render it needless.

Methinks then I perceive the inward *Recesses* of your Minds, and that your Thoughts and Resolutions are to the following Purport:

“ Well, tho’ we have met with a *Repulse* from
 “ a *Quarter* we little imagin’d, sustained a *Loss*
 “ we no way expected, are frustrated of enjoying
 “ what we esteemed near and dear to us, the be-
 “ ing restored to our *natural Rights* in *Civil Af-*
 “ fairs, yet let us seriously reflect and consider,
 “ and well remember, what the *wise Man* says,
 “ That there is a *Time* for all Things; that in the
 “ present *Affair*, which so sensibly affects us,
 “ we are not denied our Requests from any *Dis-*

“ *respect* his *M——y* or his *M——y* have to
 “ us, but only that the *Circumstances* of Things
 “ and Persons would not with Prudence and Safe-
 “ ty permit it : Nay, we cannot but observe from
 “ *other* Instances, that *this* is not *Artifice* and *Pre-*
 “ *tence* ; for do we not see a great Spirit of *Dis-*
 “ *affection* prevail throughout the *Kingdom* : Have
 “ not OLD WHIGS *changed* their *Principles* ; and
 “ are they not become a *dead* and *unexpected*
 “ Weight on the *Administration* ? Are not the
 “ most *audacious Libels* weekly published against
 “ the *Government*, without any just Cause given ?
 “ and are not *their* and *our Enemies* one and the
 “ *same*, lying in wait to *distress* them, and *hurt*
 “ *us* ? And has not *Popery* of late very conside-
 “ rably encreased among us, and which gave so
 “ just an Alarm to the *establish'd Church* and our-
 “ selves, that the Ministers of *both* thought it ne-
 “ cessary to appoint *Lectures* on purpose to expose
 “ and confute their Errors, and to establish the
 “ *Reformed* in their *Protestant* Principles ; nor are
 “ their Numbers since decreased among us : And
 “ has not great Part of EUROPE been for some
 “ Time engaged in a contentious *War* ? and tho'
 “ the Fury is abated, and a Face of *Peace* ap-
 “ pears, yet it is but as it were in *Embrio*, since
 “ it has not so fully and absolutely taken place
 “ as might be wished. Besides, we cannot but
 “ perceive, that the *M——y*, whose Fa-
 “ vour we have on the Occasion implored, have
 “ also had *their* Disappointments in Matters as
 “ *dear to them* as *this* can be to us : A plain Indi-
 “ cation that no *M——y* can at *all* Times *effect*
 “ what *they* themselves would *willingly* procure.
 “ Why then should we be discontented or angry
 “ with them for our meeting with this *Rebuff*,
 “ since we have all imaginable Reason to be per-
 “ suaded,

“ suaded, that it is only owing to the Difficulty
 “ and Prejudice of the Times, and not to any
 “ Want of Inclination in the *M——y* to have
 “ assisted us, had it been prudent and convenient;
 “ in regard it is most *certainly the Interest* of every
 “ *Administration* to oblige, if it can be, *all*, and
 “ *disoblige none*? And from the *frequent* Declara-
 “ tions made by *several* of our *Princes* since the
 “ *Revolution*, and their *Ministers*, let us patiently
 “ rest assured, that *God* in his *Providence* may so
 “ *influence* the Minds of both *Prince* and *People*,
 “ as that a *Time* may come when what we now
 “ cannot obtain, may be safely granted us with-
 “ out *Danger*, or *Offence* to any; unless by any
 “ *imprudent* Conduct in ourselves we *encrease* the
 “ *Prejudices* that at *present* so much *prevail* against
 “ us, and thereby *offend* our *Friends*, and *disap-*
 “ *point* ourselves. To prevent which,

“ Let us *resolve* to *behave* with so much *dutiful*
 “ *Affection* to his present *Majesty*, such a *Temper*
 “ and *decent Respect* to his *Ministers*, as may con-
 “ vince the *Enemies* to both, that tho’ *this is no*
 “ *Time* for us to be obliged in what we requested,
 “ so neither *is it a Time*, nor *never will*, for us to
 “ be made *Dupes* to a *Faction*, or to give our *Ad-*
 “ *versaries* just Cause to think the *Protestant Dis-*
 “ *senters* will ever *change Principles*, and *side with*
 “ *them*, in *opposition* to an *Administration*, whose
 “ *political Views* and *private Interest* are most *ap-*
 “ *parently* in our *Favour*; since were we to take
 “ that Method, it would tend to *weaken* the Hands
 “ of our *Friends*, and *strengthen* those of our *Ene-*
 “ *mies*: It would *procrastinate* and *delay*, and put
 “ more *distant* and *remote* from us *what* we now
 “ have so *eagerly* pressed: For as to a *Tory Mi-*
 “ *nistry*, have we not *already* experienced that
 “ their *Hatred* and *Enmity* towards us is *impla-*
 “ *cable*;

“ cable ; that all the *severe* Laws ever made against
 “ us was by *that Party* when in *Power* ; and from
 “ *whom* we must not expect to have *continued*
 “ those *Civil* and *Religious* Rights we *now* so am-
 “ ply enjoy : Let us therefore resolve to support
 “ a *Whig Administration*, from *whom alone* we re-
 “ ceive Kindness, and avoid falling into the
 “ Hands of *Tories*, *whose Mercies* are *cruel*.

“ Let us consider, that as we have formerly
 “ had many eminent *Prelates*, whose *moderate*
 “ and *Christian* Principles influenced them to
 “ espouse our *dearest* Interests, and which never
 “ proved *prejudicial* to the *established Church*, so a
 “ *Time* may again come, when *others* like *them*
 “ will rise up, to accomplish what we now de-
 “ sire ; and no doubt the more *prudent* and *obli-*
 “ *ging* our future Conduct is to *those* of the *esta-*
 “ *blished Church*, the *sooner* will all Prejudice on
 “ *both Sides* subside, and the *more enabled* will
 “ any *M——y* be to give us Assistance in ob-
 “ taining *this our last and only future Request* ; and
 “ to afford us yet greater Comfort, let us take
 “ a transient View of our *former* and *present* Si-
 “ tuation, and then with *thankful* Hearts *admire*
 “ and *rejoice* at our *pleasing* most *happy* Circum-
 “ stances: How ! at the *Revolution* many *severe*
 “ Laws before made against us, were altered in
 “ our Favour ; and since the present *Royal Family*
 “ succeeded to the CROWN, *others* equally *hard*
 “ and *oppressive* have been *repealed* ; and that we
 “ now enjoy every Blessing INDULGENT HEAVEN
 “ can bestow, (the *Repeal* of the *Tests* only ex-
 “ cepted ;) for are we not governed by a *Sove-*
 “ *reign* the most *tender* and *clement* ? How *watch-*
 “ *ful* and *solicitous* has he been to *secure* to us
 “ *Peace* abroad, *Tranquility* at home, a *prosperous*
 “ and *enlarged* Trade, and to make us a *happy*
 “ and

“ and *flourishing* People? This is no *imaginary*
 “ Conceit, but a *real* Truth, and what we in *fact*
 “ experience ; and the *Preservation* of our *Civil*
 “ and *Religious* Rights plainly appears to be as
 “ dear to our KING as are his own *Royal Rights*
 “ and *just Prerogatives*. We have no complaining
 “ in our *Streets* of *Property* being *invaded*, or that
 “ any Man suffers for *Conscience* Sake. All Parties,
 “ every Denomination of *Christian Protestants*, ex-
 “ perimentally know the *Happiness* of our present
 “ Constitution, the *Clemency* and *Goodness* of our
 “ *Revolution* KINGS: A most *glorious* and *truly*
 “ *happy Revolution* indeed! For since the *Origin* of
 “ this, or any other *Nation* in the *Universe*, no
 “ *History* can afford an *Instance* of any such *Period* of
 “ Time, where the *Subject* was blessed with *Princes*
 “ so *benign* and *clement*, and endued with *Senti-*
 “ *ments* of *Liberty* so *generous* and *extensive*; where
 “ a *People* in so *ample* a *Manner* enjoyed their *just*
 “ *Rights* and *Properties*, and live so *free*, *easy*,
 “ and *tranquil*, as this *Kingdom* has most happily
 “ experienced ever since the *Revolution*: And would
 “ *Papists* think it once their *Duty* to pay *Allegi-*
 “ *ance* where they receive *Protection*, even they
 “ who now are *protected* without such *Pledge* or
 “ *Security* given, (and which the *Laws* of all *Na-*
 “ *tions* require, according to an establish’d Maxim,
 “ *Protectio trahit subjectionem, & subiectio protectio-*
 “ *nem,*) would then experience with others a more
 “ *equal* Share of that *Prince’s* Favour, who *alrea-*
 “ *dy* takes them under his *Protection*, and treats
 “ them in the most *common* and *necessary* Concerns
 “ as he does his more *faithful* Subjects.

“ These Blessings we did not enjoy under the
 “ mildest of Princes, when a *Tory* Administration
 “ governed her *Councils* ; and let us not spurn at
 “ Providence that now favours us so much, lest a

“ Rod

“ *Rod of Iron* be again found to scourge us for our
 “ *Wantonness* and *Discontent*.

“ We ought also to have present to our Minds
 “ the *Declaration* of his *Royal Highness* the Prince
 “ before mentioned, who has so *generously* ex-
 “ pressed himself a *Friend* to LIBERTY, *Civil* and
 “ *Religious* ; and His happy *Nuptials* with a *Pro-*
 “ *testant Princess*, whose *Ancestors* on each Side
 “ were so *famous* for their *Zeal* and *Attachment*
 “ to the *Reformation*, at the Dawn and Infancy
 “ thereof, cannot but raise a reasonable and
 “ well-grounded *Hope*, that *Providence* will yet
 “ more vigorously exert itself in favour of the
 “ *reformed Religion*, and which may in some re-
 “ spect or other become useful to us.

“ Let us therefore be careful to improve the
 “ Incident of the *Royal Nuptials* to every Ad-
 “ vantage, and think it a happy *Presage* that great
 “ Things are reserved in Store for these *Protestant*
 “ *Kingdoms*: Let us behold it as the *Downfal* of
 “ *Popery*, the *Pretender*, and his *Emissaries*, the
 “ *two weekly Libellers*, the *Craft---n* and *F---g*,
 “ the latter of whom in particular seem thereby
 “ to have received such a *staggering Blow* in the
 “ *Guts*, as perhaps may turn to a *Dysentery* or
 “ *Mortification*, and occasion a fatal *Exit* to them-
 “ selves, but equally *happy* to us and all *true*
 “ *Britons*, since it may be hoped that a *proper*
 “ *Time* will soon after come for a *Repeal* of the
 “ *Tests*.”

THESE are, or should be, powerful Arguments to
 persuade you to a general *Acquiescence*, a *resigned*
Submission to the *Sentiments* of your *Superiors* in
 the *present Case* ; and nothing is so likely to ensure
 and facilitate *Redress*, in the Instance you so much
 want, as the conducting yourselves agreeably to
 the

the Resolutions aforesaid: And I hope to have so impartially and strongly represented on the *one* Side, what I apprehend to be the *real Purport* of your *Complaint* on the present Occasion; and at the same Time what will be *prudently* observed and resolved on by you, in respect thereof; that little remains for me farther to add, unless by way of Observation on the *Gazetteer* * before mentioned, addressed to the *Dissenters* in general; in which I thought you so *unhandsomely* treated, and by the *Craftsman* before quoted, as, in truth, to *give birth* to this more *mild* Address. In one Part of his Letter he says,

“ As to your Persons, it is plain you *lie under no Restraints*; you enjoy the Privileges of *sitting in either House of Parliament*, tho’ you *never conform to the Worship of the establish’d Church*; and I believe you can give very *few* Instances, if *any*, of Persons who have *refused* any Office of Power or Trust, because they *would not conform*. This your warmest Advocates have confess’d, — That among the *richer* Sort of *Dissenters* there are very *few* who do *not occasionally conform*.”

According to this Representation, the *Test Act* is a *dead Letter*, neither a *Restraint* on you, nor yet a *Security* to the CHURCH *establish’d*; for if *Dissenters* may *sit in either House of Parliament*, as no doubt they can, *notwithstanding the Test Acts*; and that there are only a *few* of the *richer* Sort of *Dissenters*, and hardly *any* of others, who will refuse to conform for any Office of Power and Trust, as this Author asserts; how then is the *Test Act* an *Enemy* to you, or a *Friend* to the Church? And why all this *Bustle*! Indeed, the

* *Gazet.* April 15.

same Author presently afterwards alters his Opinion, and I think expresses himself with some sort of *Passion*. His Words are,

“ Call it Prejudice, — call it Bigotry, — call
 “ it a Lust of Power, that the Members of the
 “ Church of *England* will not give their Consent
 “ that the *Test Acts* shall be repealed, can you
 “ think it reasonable that none are to be indulged
 “ but yourselves.

“ You allow, or do not think fit to deny, —
 “ that the *Church of England* ought to be supported and preserved: The Members of that
 “ Church think this cannot possibly be done, if
 “ all the different Sects in Religion, who do,
 “ or shall at any Time hereafter, dissent from her,
 “ are to enjoy the same Privileges and Advantages with the Members of the establish’d
 “ Church. You are of a contrary Opinion, that
 “ no Danger can arise from *Presbyterians, Independants, Quakers, Anabaptists*, and all other
 “ *Sects* that may hereafter spring up among us,
 “ into Offices of Power and Trust. Who now
 “ is to determine this Matter? Is it reasonable
 “ that all these different *Sects*, none of which
 “ will deny that they do not wish the Destruction
 “ of the *Church of England*, should be the sole
 “ Judges of what is necessary for her Preservation.”

As this is very contradictory to what he had before observed, so I confess it is to the former Representation given by me of the *M——y’s* favourable Disposition towards you, in having the *Test Acts* repealed, supposing the Paper published by *Authority*; but as it is certain that few, if any, of those Papers are wrote by the immediate Direction of the *M——y*, and that they so frequently contradict one another, as for Instance is done to
 this

this under Consideration in the very next,* I apprehend it will not invalidate what has been offered by me ; and indeed the Inconsistency of this very Paper is worthy Notice. In the first-cited Paragraph you are represented as “ lying under “ no Restraints, and that only a few *Dissenters*, “ whether rich or poor, would refuse to conform “ for any Office of Power or Trust ;” and yet in the other Passage, the *Test Acts* are said “ to be the “ Support and Preservation of the *Church of England*, and essentially necessary to keep out such “ as dissent from, and wish her Destruction, from “ enjoying the same Privileges and Advantages with “ the Members of the establish’d Church.” Now certainly they cannot be at the same Time useful and useless ; no Restraints to *Dissenters*, and yet necessary to keep them out.

And if what the *Gazetteer* has in one Part asserted is true, I know not the real Use of the *Test Acts* ; for if *Dissenters* now they are in Force, can by conforming, and taking the Sacrament once only, be qualified for any Place or Office of Trust, and this without Difficulty or Uneasiness to themselves, and have at the same Time any wicked Purposes to execute against the establish’d Church ; is it not as much in their Power at present to effect it, by a Conformity that is so easy to them, as if the *Test Acts* were actually repealed ? Or how is either the Church supported and preserved by not repealing those Acts ; or the different Sects in Religion who dissent from her, and wish her Destruction, more capacitated to accomplish that evil Purpose, and to enjoy the same Privileges and Advantages with the Members of the establish’d Church, by repealing it, as the *Gazetteer* affirms,

* April 16.

than *now they are*, when it stands *unrepealed*? This is a Difficulty with me, I confess, and which greatly wants to be clear'd up; or otherwise, as I before observed, according to the *Gazetteer's* Argument, the *Test Act* is no more than a dead Letter.

Thus, Gentlemen, have I brought to Conclusion what was at first propos'd, and hope you will think my Promise is fairly perform'd, in treating you with Respect, Decency, and good Manners; being fully persuaded, that mild and candid Expressions tend more to recommend Truth, and obtain Conviction, than any satirical and severe Reflections.

And as I hope it may have some Influence on you in the present Case, to pacify and appease any uneasy Sentiments you may have entertain'd on the Occasion; so I most heartily wish you could subdue and conquer all unhappy Prejudices of a different Nature, that we might be all united, as one Man, to withstand the Assaults and powerful Efforts of our vigilant and numerous Enemies the *Papists*, who are incessantly contriving the Ruin and Destruction of all *Protestants*, whether of the *establish'd Church*, or *Dissenters* from it.

I beg leave to conclude in the Words of Mr. *Walsingham* on the Occasion, which *Gazetteer* * deserves your serious Perusal: “ If you know
 “ that the whole Body of *Tories* would to a Man
 “ have voted against you: If you know that
 “ many Gentlemen voting usually with the Court
 “ could not, by the Nature of their Election
 “ Interests, have voted for you: If you know
 “ that the *Band of Patriots* (excepting a very
 “ few) would have laid in wait to have enflamed

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“ the People against the Ministry, and would
 “ have employed all their Art, and all their Ma-
 “ lice, to have made them the Victims of public
 “ Rage: If you have seen common Libels of
 “ the Faction insult the Ministry with carrying
 “ the ordinary Affairs of *Parliament* by *small*
 “ *Majorities* ; and if you know that no Method
 “ would have been left untried to have made
 “ their Majority still smaller on so disputed a
 “ a Point ;

“ Then you must acquit the Ministry of having
 “ broken any Engagements, of having failed you
 “ in any just Expectations, tho’ they had pro-
 “ mised, or tho’ they had given you Reason to
 “ believe that they would concur in your Ap-
 “ plication to Parliament.”

I am, Gentlemen,

Gray’s-Inn,
 April 24. 1736.

Your most Humble Servant.



